

Caldwell-Dennis House Adaptive Reuse Feasibility Study

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Professor JP Halls ARCH 607- Historic Preservation Studio course created an adaptive reuse plan to examine the feasibility of rehabilitating the historic Caldwell-Dennis residence into transitional housing for women reentering society.



Watch Video At: https://youtu.be/or99_Xmv2_g

Credit to:

Cooper Shields

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Credits

Caldwell-Dennis House Study Purpose

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Statewide historic preservation non-profit, Indiana Landmarks, purchased a series of neglected homes in Wabash, Indiana, with the intention of rehabilitating the exterior of the homes and putting them up for sale.


Hope House Ministry, a faith-based organization based on supplying sober living homes for men and women to help with recovery from substance abuse. Hope House approached Indiana Landmarks about acquiring one of the houses and Hope House President, Shane Beal, knew immediately upon stepping in that the Caldwell-Dennis house was the place their next sober living home.

J.P. Hall's Preservation Studio course was approached to compile an adaptive reuse study on the feasibility of integrating a sober living facility in the 1865 Second Empire home.

History →

Purpose

Caldwell-Dennis House History

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The Indiana Album: Michael J. Beauchamp Collection



Wabash County Historical Museum / wabashmuseum.org





189 N Wabash Street, or the "Caldwell-Dennis House" named in honor of Elizabeth Caldwell, its original owner and Leroy and Lalan Dennis, owners of the home from 1930 to 1973, is a Second Empire home located in the East Wabash Historic District, a National Register of Historic Places district.

The exact construction date of the Caldwell-Dennis House is unknown, however due to historic research a written account of a former resident stated that the house was built in the 1870's. The house acted as a multi family residence until c. 1920 with Elizabeth Caldwell and subsequently Carey E. Cowgill, son of congressman Calvin Cowgill, living in one section and renting out other areas.

Following Elizabeth Caldwell's death, the home was used as an income property for the Cowgill family until it was eventually purchased in 1930 by Lalan (Moore) Dennis, beginning the era of significant architectural change. Leroy Dennis, worked as an editor of the Wabash newspaper and established the Dennis Lyceum Bureau, to set up lectures, performances and Chautauqua's in communities, schools and churches across the Midwest. His firm eventually transformed into the Dennis Film Bureau, where Dennis would show movies out of his car, funded by local merchants. Lalan would become well known in the Wabash area, and in 1963 becoming the third woman ever to receive the Wabash Chamber of Commerce's Distinguished Citizen award.

Between 1930 and 1950 the Dennis' significantly modified the interior and exterior of their home with the help of noted Indiana Architect A.M. Strauss. Strauss was well known in the area due to his designs for many residential, commercial, and civic buildings, including the Wabash Eagles Theatre. The landscaping was also significantly altered during this period, with many alterations designed by Indianapolis nurseryman Alex Tuchinsky. Tuchinsky,


owner of Hillsdale Nursery, was noted for his involvement in a number of well-known landscape projects in the state, including Eero Saarinen's North Christian Church in Columbus, Indiana.

← Purpose

Methodology →

History

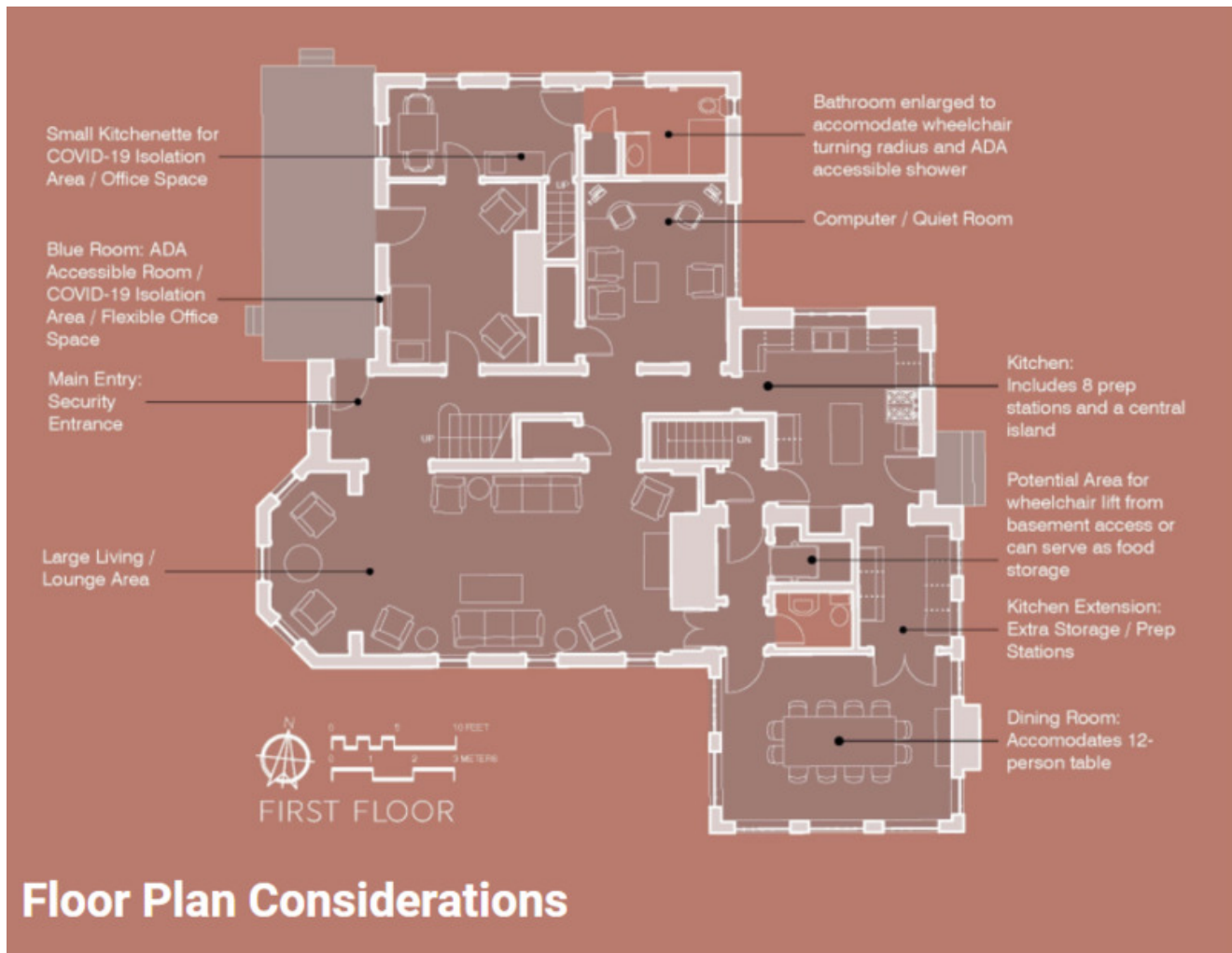
Caldwell-Dennis House Study Methodology

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Floor Plan Considerations



The student team had two, in-person visits to Wabash and the Caldwell-Dennis House to create measured drawings/blueprints, document character defining features, assess current conditions, conduct historic research and to meet with community partners.

Students also spent hours conducting historic research, both in-person at the house and Wabash city offices and using online resources such as Newspapers.com and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

Special attention was also paid to the landscaping features of the Caldwell-Dennis House as the landscape itself is considered to be a character defining feature of the property.

Following the compilation of background research and in-person findings, the team started to formulate recommendations and ideas for the integration of a sober living house and an historic home. These recommendations included programming a layout and determining the best locations for specific rooms in the house, landscaping changes, and best practices to remediate years of physical neglect which led to issues in the infrastructure of the home.

Prior to formulating recommendations, comparable were identified in the form of existing sober living and other rehabilitation facilities that were located in historic homes. These examples were examined by the team and were used to formulate ideas for the programming

of the Caldwell-Dennis House.

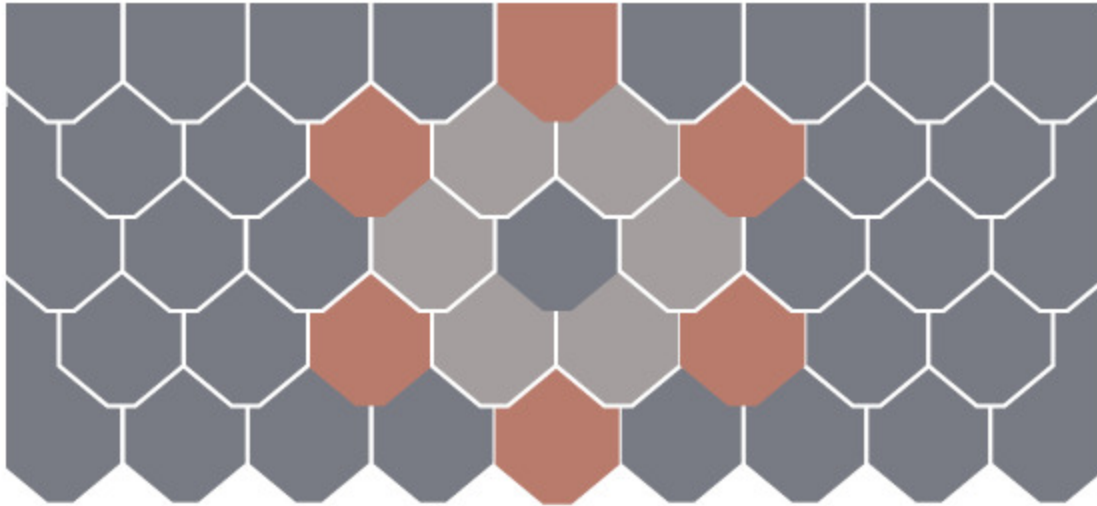
[← History](#)

[Final Document →](#)

Methodology

Caldwell-Dennis House Final Document

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FEASIBILITY STUDY: THE CALDWELL-DENNIS HOUSE

189 NORTH WABASH STREET, WABASH, INDIANA





Above and Cover Photo by: Cooper Shields, February 2021



From January through March 2021, the class of ARCH 607: Preservation Studio I, Ball State University College of Architecture and Planning, taught by Professor J.P. Hall, prepared this Feasibility Study for and in partnership with Indiana Landmarks' Northeast Field Office and Hope House Wabash.

Project Team: Professor J.P. Hall (Instructor), Nancy Jones, Robert Jonet, Caitlin Lehman, Abby Marshall, Cooper Shields, & Haley Swindle

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Paul Hayden, Director of the Northeast Field Office,
Indiana Landmarks

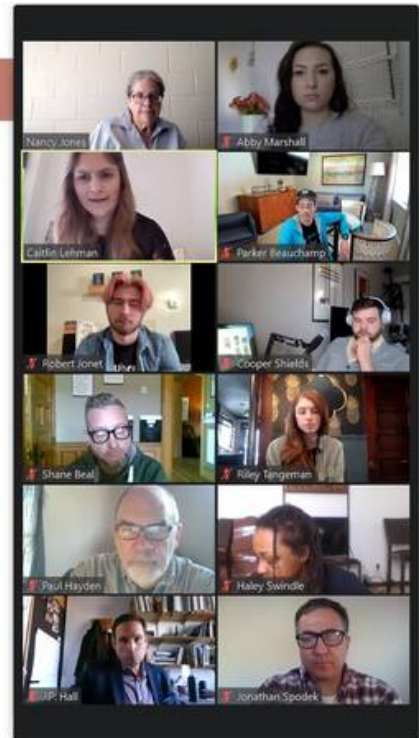
Shane Beal, Chief Empathy Officer CEO and Founder,
Hope House

Existing Floor Plans



Number of Bedrooms: 6

Number of Bathrooms: 5.5 (+.5 previously on north side of first floor)



With all of the knowledge collected during the site visits and the information regarding research and recommendations compiled, the team compiled a final document. The document contains an exhaustive history on the home, surrounding area and the landscape, a brief demographic makeup of the surrounding area, data regarding the current conditions of the structure as well as character defining features and a set of measured drawings, leading up to recommendations concerning the proposed adaptive reuse and continued use of the historic home, including recommendations for repairs and continued maintenance.

Previous to the completion of the final document, a second virtual meeting was held with stakeholders from Indiana Landmarks and Hope House, as well as other vested parties. A summarized version of the document was presented as a PowerPoint and allowed for involved parties to give feedback and opinions as well as suggest changes to the document, before it was finalized.

The Caldwell-Dennis House Feasibility Study project was immensely challenging and interesting to all involved from Professor Hall's course. The project allowed team members to put theoretical skills learned in other Historic Preservation courses to use in a real-world scenario, as well as giving them the opportunity to have hands-on experience investigating an historic structure. The research done for history, precedent studies and architectural conservation by team members was also instrumental in providing valuable insight to what occurs often in historic preservation projects.

← [Methodology](#)
Final Document

